

REMARKS

Please reconsider the present application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 9 and 10 contain allowable subject matter.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1, 5, 6, and 8-10 were pending in this application. By way of this reply, claim 1, 5, 6, and 8 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, claims 9 and 10 are currently pending in this application. Claim 9 is independent, and claim 10 depends directly from claim 9.

Claim Amendments

By way of this reply, claims 1, 5, 6, and 8 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 9, which depended directly from claim 1, has been amended into independent form including all of the limitations of claim 1. No new matter has been added in these amendments. Further, because the amendments to the claims have been made solely to cancel the rejected claims, the amendments should not require new search. Accordingly, entry and favorable consideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

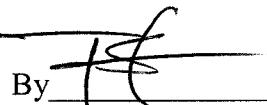
Claims 1, 5, 6, and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,331,276 (“Takei”). As discussed above, by way of this reply, claims 1, 5, 6, and 8 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, this rejection is now moot.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 15115/240001).

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Respectfully submitted,

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